RENTAL MARKET REPORT

British Columbia Highlights

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

www.cmhc.ca

OCTOBER 2004 SURVEY

PROVINCIAL VACANCY RATE FALLS

According to the results of the annual rental market survey conducted in October 2004 by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the average vacancy rate in privately initiated rental apartments with three or more units now stands at 2.4 per cent, down from 3.1 per cent in 2003. Of the 26 urban centres surveyed, 16 reported a decline in vacancy rates.

The survey results show that vacancy rates fell in two of the province's three census metropolitan areas. The vacancy rate in Vancouver dropped 0.7 percentage points to 1.3 per cent, while the vacancy rate in Victoria declined to 0.6 per cent, the lowest rate in the province. Strong rental demand, a result of employment growth and migration, combined with limited additions to the purpose built rental stock reduced the number of vacancies this year in both cities.

Apartment vacancy rates were once again lower than those for townhouse units, but both rental types experienced a decline. The townhouse vacancy rate fell from 6.5 per cent to 5.5 per cent, again reflecting strong demand.

According to the survey results, average rents rose for all sizes of apartments and townhouses. Lower vacancy rates, as a result of increased demand, have put upward pressure on rental rates for the province. In both Vancouver and Victoria average rents increased below the rate of inflation. Recent rent movements in these two cities have been closely aligned with inflationary trends.

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Apartment Vacancy Rates (%)	2003	2004
Bachelor	2.4	1.9
1 Bedroom	2.7	2.0
2 Bedroom	3.8	3.0
3 Bedroom+	5.8	5.2
Total	3.1	2.4

Total Apartment Units (2004)	Vacant	Total
Bachelor	318	16,618
1 Bedroom	1,877	96,031
2 Bedroom	1,577	52,084
3 Bedroom+	227	4,350
Total	3,999	169,083

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Table 1

Vacancy Rates in Market Rental Apartment Units
by Number of Bedrooms, Urban Centres in British Columbia

Centre	Bachelor		One Bedroom		Two Bedroom		Three+ Bedroom		Total	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Abbotsford C.M.A.	1.5	2.8	2.6	2.4	2.4	3.1	**	**	2.5	2.8
Campbell River	4.3	6.4	7.9	10.7	7.8	4.5	17.0	4.3	8.1	6.6
Chilliwack	**	**	3.3	2.6	2.8	2.5	**	**	3.0	2.6
Courtenay- Comox	9.3	5.3	1.7	0.9	4.8	1.3	4.2	1.4	4.0	1.4
Cranbrook	4.4	14.3	6.6	11.1	7.5	5.8	0.0	0.0	6.8	7.5
Dawson Creek	**	9.9	8.8	9.0	9.4	10.8	**	**	9.3	10.0
Duncan- North Cowichan	11.4	5.9	8.3	4.9	9.0	2.0	10.5	0.0	8.8	3.6
Fort St. John	6.8	6.9	8.0	6.7	10.0	3.1	**	**	8.7	4.8
Kamloops	8.6	2.0	4.7	4.1	3.3	1.5	4.1	2.5	4.2	2.7
Kelowna	5.6	0.0	1.7	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	1.5	1.4	1.0
Kitimat	17.4	34.8	35.5	37.0	45.0	49.8	**	**	40.5	44.4
Nanaimo	1.6	4.2	0.4	0.8	2.1	1.4	0.6	1.7	1.2	1.4
Parksville- Qualicum Beach	5.9	5.9	1.6	2.4	1.7	1.8	0.0	0.0	1.7	2.0
Penticton	4.5	2.1	2.6	2.3	1.8	1.4	0.0	0.0	2.4	1.9
Port Alberni	22.1	2.9	19.1	9.5	14.7	4.8	10.5	12.5	17.0	7.2
Powell River	18.2	0.0	34.0	19.7	19.2	16.6	37.8	34.9	27.4	18.9
Prince George	18.4	15.7	8.9	9.2	8.2	6.8	**	**	10.3	9.7
Prince Rupert	35.4	42.1	30.4	32.8	39.1	44.6	35.2	38.7	34.8	39.2
Quesnel	15.4	22.3	23.2	13.7	20.0	16.2	**	**	20.9	15.1
Salmon Arm	29.4	5.6	5.3	2.9	4.4	3.1	0.0	0.0	5.8	3.1
Squamish	2.2	15.6	0.0	8.0	0.8	14.5	5.0	9.4	1.3	12.1
Terrace	**	**	35.8	42.5	36.6	38.0	41.3	27.4	35.8	39.1
Vancouver C.M.A.	1.5	0.9	2.1	1.2	2.1	1.6	2.3	1.7	2.0	1.3
Vernon	1.0	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.1	1.8	1.4	2.0	2.0	2.0
Victoria C.M.A.	1.1	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.9	0.5	1.3	0.6	1.1	0.6
Williams Lake	41.7	26.2	27.8	20.4	21.4	21.8	28.2	**	24.6	21.3
Weighted Average	**2.4**	**1.9**	**2.7**	**2.0**	**3.8**	**3.0**	**5.8**	**5.2**	**3.1**	**2.4**

1. Privately initiated structures with three or more units.

2. C.M.A. = Census Metropolitan Area.

3. ** data has been suppressed

4. N/U = No Units

Table 2

Vacancy Rates in Private Townhouse Rental Units
by Number of Bedrooms, Urban centres in British Columbia

Centre	One Bedroom		Two Bedroom		Three + Bedroom		Total	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Abbotsford C.M.A.	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Campbell River	6.3	2.2	12.6	8.0	0.0	2.3	9.1	6.0
Chilliwack	**	**	7.8	2.3	7.5	1.9	7.9	2.1
Courtenay- Comox	**	**	4.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.3
Cranbrook	0.0	0.0	9.3	5.6	3.9	2.8	6.7	4.2
Dawson Creek	**	**	**	**	**	17.0	**	12.2
Duncan- North Cowichan	5.2	5.2	1.4	0.0	8.2	0.0	4.8	1.5
Fort St. John	5.1	12.1	8.9	4.7	9.9	14.0	8.8	10.1
Kamloops	7.1	0.0	3.3	3.0	8.5	1.6	6.2	2.1
Kelowna	0.0	3.1	3.4	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.9	1.9
Kitimat	N/U	N/U	50.0	**	49.6	**	49.7	**
Nanaimo	0.0	4.0	0.0	1.9	3.8	4.1	1.3	3.0
Parksville- Qualicum Beach	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Penticton	**	**	**	**	3.4	1.1	4.1	4.2
Port Alberni	**	**	4.2	0.0	4.8	1.0	4.3	0.6
Powell River	N/U	**	**	**	**	**	**	0.0
Prince George	**	9.3	11.4	11.9	18.4	**	15.4	16.2
Prince Rupert	**	**	**	**	**	49.4	**	45.1
Quesnel	**	40.0	**	11.8	20.9	33.3	23.0	29.9
Salmon Arm	**	**	**	**	**	**	5.0	5.4
Squamish	N/U	N/U	**	**	**	22.9	6.9	19.0
Terrace	**	**	13.1	11.3	14.3	27.1	13.2	18.2
Vancouver C.M.A.	1.0	0.8	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.3
Vernon	**	4.2	1.9	0.0	2.4	0.0	3.5	2.0
Victoria C.M.A.	5.2	2.7	1.0	0.0	1.9	4.5	2.1	2.8
Williams Lake	13.3	13.3	14.5	12.9	**	**	14.7	9.3
Weighted Average	**5.3**	**5.2**	**5.4**	**3.8**	**7.3**	**6.8**	**6.5**	**5.5**

1. Privately initiated structures with three or more units.

2. C.M.A. = Census Metropolitan Area.

3. ** data has been suppressed

4. N/U = No Units

Table 3

Vacancy Rates in Market Rental Apartment and Row Units by Bedroom Type, Urban centres in British Columbia

Centre	Bachelor		One Bedroom		Two Bedroom		Three+ Bedroom		Total	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Abbotsford C.M.A.	1.5	2.8	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.9	**	5.6	2.6	2.8
Campbell River	4.1	6.0	7.7	9.8	8.8	5.2	8.4	3.4	8.3	6.5
Chilliwack	**	**	3.4	2.5	3.2	2.5	**	**	3.3	2.6
Courtenay- Comox	9.3	5.3	1.7	0.9	4.7	1.1	1.4	0.5	3.7	1.2
Cranbrook	8.8	12.5	6.3	10.7	7.9	5.8	3.0	2.1	6.8	6.7
Dawson Creek	**	9.9	9.0	9.0	12.6	9.9	**	17.0	12.5	10.5
Duncan- North Cowichan	11.4	5.9	8.1	5.0	8.3	1.8	9.1	0.0	8.4	3.3
Fort St. John	6.8	6.9	7.7	7.2	9.8	3.4	8.6	12.4	8.8	5.9
Kamloops	8.6	2.0	4.7	4.0	3.3	1.7	7.1	1.8	4.4	2.7
Kelowna	5.5	0.0	1.6	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.7	1.6	1.1
Kitimat	17.4	34.8	35.5	37.0	45.6	50.1	45.4	44.7	42.3	44.5
Nanaimo	1.8	4.4	0.4	0.9	1.9	1.4	1.7	2.6	1.2	1.5
Parksville- Qualicum Beach	5.9	5.9	1.4	2.1	1.9	1.9	0.0	0.0	1.8	2.0
Penticton	4.4	2.0	2.6	2.3	2.2	2.1	3.0	1.0	2.6	2.1
Port Alberni	22.1	2.9	18.6	9.3	13.6	4.3	6.3	4.2	15.2	6.3
Powell River	16.7	0.0	34.0	19.5	18.3	15.8	36.2	27.4	26.9	18.1
Prince George	19.0	15.6	8.8	9.2	8.4	7.1	19.0	**	11.0	10.4
Prince Rupert	35.4	42.1	30.5	33.2	38.3	43.5	43.9	43.1	36.4	39.8
Quesnel	15.4	22.3	25.5	15.6	19.7	15.7	20.2	30.7	21.5	19.1
Salmon Arm	29.4	5.6	5.3	2.9	4.1	2.9	5.9	5.9	5.7	3.3
Squamish	2.2	15.6	0.0	8.0	0.8	13.4	6.9	17.5	2.3	13.3
Terrace	**	**	34.6	41.3	31.1	31.6	25.0	27.2	30.4	34.0
Vancouver C.M.A.	1.5	0.9	2.1	1.2	2.1	1.6	1.8	1.4	2.0	1.3
Vernon	1.0	3.2	2.5	2.4	2.1	1.7	1.8	1.1	2.2	2.0
Victoria C.M.A.	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.7	0.9	0.4	1.6	2.4	1.1	0.7
Williams Lake	41.7	26.2	26.7	19.9	20.2	20.4	18.0	10.3	21.9	18.2
Weighted Average	**2.4**	**1.9**	**2.7**	**2.0**	**3.9**	**3.1**	**6.6**	**6.1**	**3.3**	**2.5**

1. Privately initiated structures with three or more units.

2. C.M.A. = Census Metropolitan Area.

3. ** data has been suppressed

4. N/U = No Units

Table 4

Average Rents in Market Rental Apartment Units by Bedroom Type
Urban Centres in British Columbia

Centre	Bachelor		One Bedroom		Two Bedroom		Three+ Bedroom	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Abbotsford C.M.A.	445	442	537	546	672	684	**	770
Campbell River	378	395	440	462	521	538	607	620
Chilliwack	**	**	497	508	645	640	**	**
Courtenay - Comox	359	362	469	484	559	577	610	648
Cranbrook	363	366	448	454	541	556	603	620
Dawson Creek	**	411	453	483	542	560	**	626
Duncan- North Cowichan	407	416	463	463	572	577	649	670
Fort St. John	463	485	569	582	664	676	**	761
Kamloops	429	440	498	509	601	623	720	728
Kelowna	483	467	575	589	697	723	741	**
Kitimat	369	369	415	411	476	476	**	**
Nanaimo	396	408	504	518	601	629	699	737
Parksville-Qualicum	427	430	516	538	604	610	667	663
Penticton	387	404	484	499	581	601	665	**
Port Alberni	334	355	380	381	483	494	510	488
Powell River	313	**	432	449	489	505	**	**
Prince George	407	416	481	474	568	573	**	**
Prince Rupert	406	387	472	475	536	534	600	587
Quesnel	330	328	349	362	409	421	**	**
Salmon Arm	375	388	509	512	620	636	624	652
Squamish	443	455	**	**	**	**	702	**
Terrace	**	388	435	431	490	489	575	568
Vancouver C.M.A.	654	668	759	774	965	984	1119	1153
Vernon	365	402	479	503	584	603	605	632
Victoria C.M.A.	515	516	619	630	789	799	905	918
Williams Lake	342	332	422	423	511	520	595	**
Weighted Average	**602**	**612**	**695**	**708**	**806**	**821**	**917**	**945**

1. Privately initiated structures with three or more units.

2. C.M.A. = Census Metropolitan Area.

3. ** data has been suppressed

4. N/U = No Units

Table 5

Average Rents in Market Rental Townhouse Units by Bedroom Type
Urban Centres in British Columbia

Centre	One Bedroom		Two Bedroom		Three + Bedroom		Total	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Abbotsford C.M.A.	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Campbell River	424	449	533	541	610	607	526	535
Chilliwack	**	**	632	613	700	720	637	641
Courtenay- Comox	**	**	519	548	675	702	581	606
Cranbrook	432	**	529	**	626	624	564	565
Dawson Creek	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Duncan- North Cowichan	489	495	564	571	**	735	593	610
Fort St. John	555	558	698	717	833	866	741	763
Kamloops	398	422	675	672	780	788	723	728
Kelowna	**	**	663	680	**	**	673	693
Kitimat	N/U	N/U	415	**	474	**	456	**
Nanaimo	449	**	628	666	715	807	617	678
Parksville-Qualicum Beach	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Penticton	**	**	**	**	780	754	710	685
Port Alberni	**	**	**	**	525	536	507	516
Powell River	N/U	**	**	**	**	**	**	483
Prince George	**	594	550	557	604	**	582	588
Prince Rupert	**	**	**	**	**	590	**	574
Quesnel	**	**	**	434	508	507	480	480
Salmon Arm	**	**	**	**	**	**	619	625
Squamish	N/U	N/U-	**	**	**	**	**	**
Terrace	**	**	578	574	588	**	575	577
Vancouver C.M.A.	654	**	1,059	1,075	1,189	1,200	1,132	1,144
Vernon	**	437	565	573	**	699	558	574
Victoria C.M.A.	559	575	790	819	1,066	1,120	899	940
Williams Lake	379	**	483	485	**	**	525	**
Weighted Average	**507**	**527**	**731**	**745**	**922**	**944**	**812**	**833**

1. Privately initiated structures with three or more units.

2. C.M.A. = Census Metropolitan Area.

3. ** data has been suppressed

4. N/U = No Units

Table 6

Survey Universe and Vacancies of Market Rental Apartment and Row Units by Bedroom Type
Urban centres in British Columbia

Centre	Bachelor		One Bedroom		Two Bedroom		Three+ Bedroom		Total	
	Vac	Univ	Vac	Univ	Vac	Univ	Vac	Univ	Vac	Univ
Abbotsford C.M.A.	3	124	44	1,796	69	2,347	8	145	124	4,412
Campbell River	3	50	42	429	44	840	3	89	92	1,408
Chilliwack	**	**	35	1,358	31	1,276	**	**	74	2,839
Courtenay- Comox	4	76	5	532	14	1,225	1	213	24	2,046
Cranbrook	4	32	39	366	46	795	4	188	93	1,381
Dawson Creek	7	72	40	449	37	375	24	140	109	1,036
Duncan- North Cowichan	4	68	38	767	13	710	0	116	55	1,661
Fort St. John	5	72	47	656	29	871	25	204	107	1,803
Kamloops	3	151	66	1,635	31	1,875	7	379	107	4,041
Kelowna	0	121	19	1,741	26	2,418	4	240	49	4,521
Kitimat	8	23	74	200	226	450	64	144	372	817
Nanaimo	13	298	14	1,628	25	1,711	5	195	57	3,832
Parksville-Qualicum Beach	1	17	3	153	8	419	0	21	12	610
Penticton	3	148	23	998	20	941	2	148	47	2,235
Port Alberni	2	70	45	484	21	485	6	142	74	1,181
Powell River	0	13	56	288	44	282	14	51	115	635
Prince George	50	319	112	1,212	125	1,749	**	**	404	3,881
Prince Rupert	44	104	117	351	161	370	89	207	411	1,033
Quesnel	3	15	35	226	54	347	50	164	143	752
Salmon Arm	1	18	5	172	6	194	2	34	14	418
Squamish	7	45	7	87	17	124	14	80	45	339
Terrace	**	**	61	148	109	344	32	119	221	650
Vancouver C.M.A.	104	11,895	828	66,466	429	26,764	66	4,604	1,427	109,729
Vernon	3	95	21	875	16	961	2	183	42	2,113
Victoria C.M.A.	18	2,688	91	13,493	33	7,390	21	879	163	24,450
Williams Lake	4	14	43	217	80	393	18	171	144	794
Total	**321**	**16,680**	**1,920**	**96,840**	**1,720**	**55,799**	**584**	**9,596**	**4,544**	**178,915**

Vac = Vacant

Univ = Universe

1. Privately initiated structures with three or more units.

2. C.M.A. = Census Metropolitan Area.

3. ** data has been suppressed

4. N/U = No Units

METHODOLOGY

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) conducts the **Rental Market Survey** (RMS) every year in October to estimate the relative strengths in the rental market. The survey is conducted on a sample basis in all urban areas with populations of 10,000 and more. The survey targets only structures with at least three rental units, which have been on the market for at least three months. The data collected for a structure depends on its initiation type (public or private), and whether it is an apartment or a row structure. The survey collects vacant unit data for all sampled structures. The market rent data are collected for only privately initiated structures. The available unit data are obtained only for privately initiated apartments. Most data contained in this publication refer to privately initiated apartment structures.

The survey is conducted by a combination of telephone interviews and site visits, and information is obtained from the owner, manager, or building superintendent. The survey is conducted during the first two weeks of October, and the results reflect market conditions at that time.

Definitions

Rent: The rent refers to the actual amount tenants pay for their unit. No adjustments are made for the inclusion or exclusion of amenities and services such as heat, hydro, parking, and hot water. For available and vacant units, the rent is the rent being asked for by the owner for the unit.

Rental Apartment Structure: Any building containing three or more rental units, of which at least one unit is not ground oriented. Owner-occupied units are not included in the rental building unit count.

Rental Row Structure: Any building containing three or more rental units, all of which are ground oriented. Owner-occupied units are not included in the rental building unit count.

Vacancy: A unit is considered vacant if, at the time of the survey, it is physically unoccupied and available for immediate rental.

Acknowledgement

The Rental Market Survey could not have been conducted without the cooperation of the rental property owners, managers and building superintendents throughout Canada. CMHC acknowledges their hard work and assistance in providing timely and accurate information. As a result of their contribution, CMHC is able to provide information that benefits the entire housing industry.

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